



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Western Region Notes

FEBRUARY 26, 2004

REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Fire Weather Service Assessment Results Presented: Last week, I traveled to NWSH to attend the California fire weather service assessment briefing for General J. WFOs Oxnard and San Diego were the two offices reviewed during this assessment. Congratulations to both offices for a job well done. We must keep in mind service assessments are opportunities to find ways to improve our products and services. While there are a number of findings and recommendations, we should not lose sight of the outstanding job by those two offices. The 2003 fire season was their first season since we completed the transfer of services from Riverside. Thank you to the staffs of WFO San Diego and WFO Oxnard.

SOD Review Held at WFO Las Vegas: I accompanied SOD staff on their second program review for this year. I am pleased with the overall management of the WFO Las Vegas electronics program. These reviews are time-consuming for all involved. Thanks to WFO Las Vegas staff and WRH staff for their efforts. It is always good when you can go into a review or meeting and learn something new, especially something that might help other offices. I believe WFO Vegas staff and WRH staff did just that. I would like to also recognize Larry Jensen for his outstanding efforts as the environmental and safety focal point. WRH staff requested documentation of the Vegas program to be shared as a best practice. Thanks, WFO Las Vegas for the great visit, and thanks for inviting us to join in your diversity activity.

Director Photos Available: Official photos of NWS Director David L. Johnson and other NOAA leaders are available at the NWSH Communications page. Photos can be printed for use in your office's display of NOAA leaders photos.

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/presentations/tools.htm>

AROUND THE REGION



WFO Great Falls MIC Steve Brueske addresses the plenary session at the annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management.

Montana WFOs Support Annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management:

The four Montana WFOs were represented at the 37th Annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management in Billings, February 9-12. Jim Scarlett (WFO Billings WCM) and the Billings office worked with Western Region Public Affairs to create and staff a booth at which NWS products and services were displayed. Steve Brueske (WFO Great Falls MIC) addressed the plenary session about drought and flood potential this spring.

He also discussed the importance and value of the Emergency Alert System in Montana.

WFO Glasgow MIC Julie Adolphson and WCM Tanja Fransen participated in a meeting with the Governor, state Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) personnel, county commissioners, and local DES coordinators from the counties most severely affected by record breaking snowfall in northeast Montana this winter. NWS Glasgow prepared briefing packets for the State DES staff, the Governor, and her team that provided extensive information officials can use to evaluate possible disaster declarations.

On a lighter note, Steve Brueske presented a jacket to recently retired Disaster and Emergency Services Administrator, Jim Greene, during the Governor's luncheon. The jacket, purchased with contributions from members of the four NWS offices in Montana, was emblazoned with the Montana National Weather Service logo.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Statement of the Week: This week's Statement of the Week is a Flood Statement issued by SOO Ivory Small and forecaster Joseph Dandrea of WFO San Diego. During the February 20-22 weekend, widespread heavy rainfall developed over southern California. WFOs San Diego and Los Angeles did an excellent job issuing outlooks and flash flood watches well in advance of the event, as well as flash warnings as heavy rainfall developed. Each time a new flash flood watch or warning was issued, WFO San Diego issued a flood statement summarizing current products, along with an update as to the latest forecasts. This provided customers with a convenient "one-stop shopping" product to reduce confusion. This week's product is one of many such products issued. Good job WFO San Diego!

2/22/2004 3:12:17 PM - FLSSGX
WGUS86 KSGX 222210
FLSSGX
CAZ042-043-048-050-056-057-058-061-062-230100-

FLOOD STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SAN DIEGO CA
205 PM PST SUN FEB 22 2004

...A FLASH FLOOD WARNING HAS BEEN ISSUED UNTIL 5 PM FOR THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY DESERTS...THE RIVERSIDE COUNTY MOUNTAINS...AND THE COACHELLA VALLEY...

...FLASH FLOOD WARNING CONTINUES UNTIL 5 PM TODAY IN AND NEAR THE BURN AREAS OF SOUTHWEST SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY...

...FLOOD ADVISORY FOR URBAN AND SMALL STREAM FLOODING CONTINUES UNTIL 5 PM FOR THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY COASTAL AREAS...THE INLAND EMPIRE AND ORANGE COUNTY...

...FLASH FLOOD WATCH CONTINUES IN AND NEAR THE BURN AREAS OF SAN BERNARDINO AND SAN DIEGO COUNTIES THROUGH 3 AM MONDAY...

THROUGH 5 PM...NUMEROUS SHOWERS...MOSTLY OF MODERATE INTENSITY... WITH ISOLATED THUNDERSTORMS AND LOCALLY HEAVY RAIN WILL CONTINUE ACROSS MUCH OF SAN DIEGO...RIVERSIDE...AND PORTIONS OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTIES INCLUDING THE BURN AREAS ALONG THE LOWER COASTAL SLOPES OF THE MOUNTAINS. SHOWERS WITH RAINFALL OF OVER ONE HALF INCH PER HOUR ARE MOVING NORTH AROUND 10 TO 15 MPH AND EXTEND SOUTH OF THE INTERNATIONAL BORDER.

RAINFALL OF THIS INTENSITY WILL LIKELY CAUSE ADDITIONAL FLOODING AND MUD AND ROCK SLIDES.

RESIDENTS AND MOTORISTS IN AND BELOW RECENTLY BURNED AREAS SHOULD BE ALERT TO HEAVY MUD AND DEBRIS FLOWS WHICH MAY BLOCK ROADS AND CULVERTS. POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS FLOODING AND PROPERTY LOSS COULD RESULT IN AREAS WHERE RUNOFF IS RESTRICTED OR BLOCKED.

IN ADDITION...A HEAVY SHOWERS AND ISOLATED THUNDERSTORMS WILL CONTINUE TO MOVE NORTH THROUGH THE COASTAL AND VALLEY AREAS. THE SHOWERS WILL RESULT IN LOCAL PONDING OF WATER IN URBAN AREAS AND FLOODING OF SMALL STREAMS UNTIL ABOUT 5 PM.

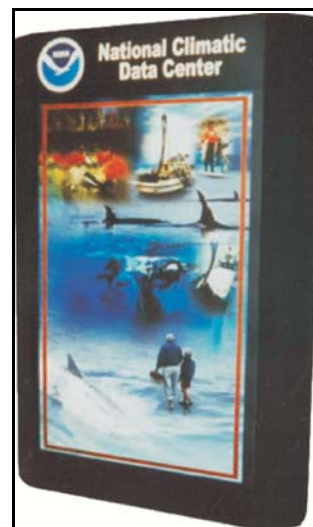
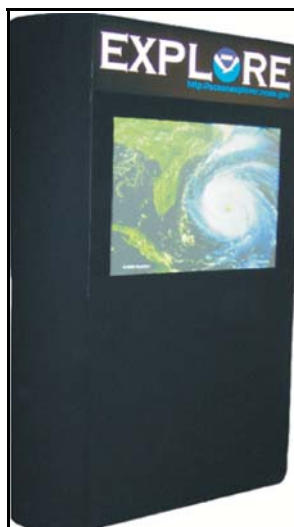
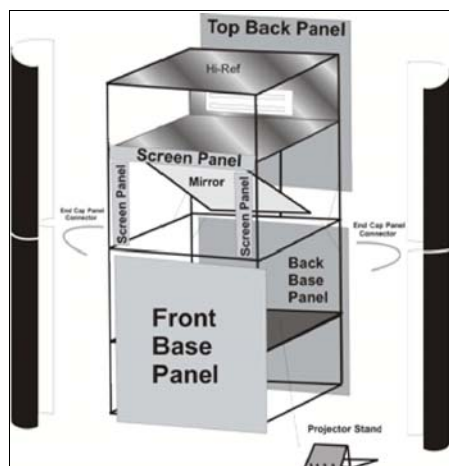
ANOTHER UPPER LEVEL DISTURBANCE WILL MOVE ACROSS SOUTHWEST CALIFORNIA THIS EVENING. LOWER LEVEL FLOW WILL ALSO SHIFT FROM THE SOUTHEAST AND SOUTH...TO THE WEST. AREAS OF MODERATE TO HEAVY RAINFALL...AND SNOWFALL ABOVE 4500 TO 5000 FEET...ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE THROUGH THIS EVENING. RAIN AND SNOW IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN DECREASING MONDAY.

MUD SLIDES AND DEBRIS FLOWS HAVE BEEN REPORTED AND WILL CONTINUE ...ESPECIALLY IN BURN AREAS AND IN STEEP CANYONS. PEOPLE IN THE WARNING AREAS SHOULD BE READY TO MOVE TO SAFETY IF FLASH FLOODING OCCURS.

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SMALL/JAD

New Display Available for Outreach Activities in Western Region: Western Region Headquarters has obtained a new display for use at major outreach events (e.g. outdoor recreation/boat shows, fairs, exhibitions, etc.). The display's centerpiece is a large stand-up unit with a rear-projection video screen. It is packed in three (3) wheeled containers. Each user will need to supply their own video projector (e.g. PC projector). It can be reserved for Western Region activities and will be shipped upon request. For

information, contact Marilu Trainor, NOAA Public Affairs, (801) 524-5692, ext. 226, email: Marilu.Trainor@noaa.gov).



WFO Medford Participates in Roseburg, Oregon Sportsmen Show:



(L to R) WFO Medford forecasters Ryan Sandler, Sven Nelaimischkies, and James Reynolds(WCM)

WFO Medford staffed a NOAA information booth at the Roseburg, Oregon Outdoor Sportsmen and Boat Show, February 13-15. Approximately 12,000 people attended the show. The staff promoted NWS products and services, including a new dedicated marine forecast telephone number for Oregon and Northern California. Attendees were shown real-time displays of satellite imagery, radar data, and NWS forecasts (including some gridded forecast products) via an Internet connection. NOAA Weather Radio and the StormReady program were also featured.

Chinese Meteorological Delegation Briefed by WFO San Diego: A delegation of Chinese Meteorologists recently toured WFO San Diego. On February 20, WCM Ed Clark and MIC Jim Purpura briefed the delegation of 14 meteorologists from the Jiaxing Meteorological Station in Zhejiang Province. Discussions included how various meteorological models perform on the west coast and the nature of NWS interactions (at the WFO level) with the public and various private interests.

The delegation was impressed with the variety of meteorological displays available in the office. They were also impressed with the National Digital Forecast Database (NDFD), including the "point and click" web page interface used to produce forecasts (text and graphics) from the digital database.



Ed Clark (WCM) briefs the Chinese delegation.



Seattle forecaster Allen Kam talks with pilots at the NW Aviation Conference and Trade Show.

WFO Seattle Participates in NW Aviation Conference and Trade Show: WFO Seattle participated in the Northwest Aviation Conference and Trade Show on February 21-22 at the Western Washington State Fairgrounds in Puyallup. The booth focused on NWS aviation products and services, but also highlighted a wide range of other NWS products/services. An internet connection was used to demonstrate the NWS Aviation Weather Center's web site and associated products in real-time. Approximately 10,000 people attended this year's event.

HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE SERVICES DIVISION

WFO Tucson Staff Tours the Tohono O'Odham Nation: On February 11, WFO Tucson Hydrologist Mike Schaffner and WCM Tom Evans toured the Tohono O'Odham Nation. The Nation covers an area in south central Arizona roughly the size of Connecticut. Over a dozen trouble spots and future stream and precipitation gage sites were visited. Flash flooding is a problem on the Nation due to the lack of zoning regulations and the extensive use of earth berms for water diversion. The Nation is working on their first gage network which should be composed of 17 real time gages. At the current time, there are three USGS stream gages and two COOP sites to cover this vast area.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

California-Nevada River Forecast Center (CNRFC) QPF Grids distributed to WFOs: The CNRFC HAS routinely edits QPF grids for input to their hydrologic models. WR/SSD is distributing these grids through the WR Wide Area Network (WAN) to the WFOs under the CNRFC umbrella. The grids are viewable on AWIPS and the GFE. This purpose of this effort is to provide the WFOs with another set of first guess QPF fields for the Forecast Office IFPS grids and improve coordination between the RFC and

WFOs.

Advanced Warning Operations Course (AWOC): The dates for the “train the trainer” portion of The Advanced Warning Operations Course have been set. All WFOs/RFCs are required to send the SOO/DOH or radar focal point to this 1-week course at the WDTB in Norman, Oklahoma. WR course slots will be weighted toward the September course dates in case of another busy fire weather season. A formal call for WR WFO trainers to request their course week will occur in mid-February with a mid-March deadline. **WFOs should take this mandatory course into account when setting up their summer annual leave schedule over the next few months.** The AWOC course dates are:

August 3-5, 2004

August 17-19, 2004

August 24-26, 2004

August 31-Sep 2, 2004

September 14-16, 2004

September 21-23, 2004

AWOC will provide updated radar training to all NWS forecasters in the fall and winter of 2004/2005.

WR PD&T and Intern Report - Due April 15: The office semi-annual Professional Development and Training Plan (PD&T) Report is due April 15.

COMET Outreach Proposal Deadlines - March 15: The Cooperative Program for Operational Meteorology, Education, and Training (COMET) has announced its 2004 Outreach Program Request for Proposals (RFP) for Cooperative Projects. The final version of the NWS Cooperative proposal must be submitted to the COMET Outreach Program by March 15, 2004.

The Cooperative Projects may be one to three years in duration and typically have budgets with a range from about \$20,000 to \$41,000. More information and submission requirements can be found online at: <http://www.comet.ucar.edu/outreach/coop.htm>.

The COMET Program is also accepting proposals for Partners Projects. The average Partners Project has been approximately \$7,000 (excluding those items funded directly by the NWS). Since Partners Project funds are limited, it is unlikely a proposal will be funded if its budget significantly exceeds the average. Additional information and submission requirements are available at: <http://www.comet.ucar.edu/outreach/part.htm>.

Winter Storms Reconnaissance (WSR) and Special Observations for 2004: The Monterey Forecast Office is serving as the Western Region coordination focal point for this season's Winter Storms Reconnaissance (WSR) Program. This program will continue through March 15. The goal of the program is to deploy targeted dropsondes well out over the Pacific from aircraft flying out from Honolulu and Anchorage. The objective is to improve the NCEP model forecasts for critical weather situations when there is significant model disagreement or uncertainty. For the western U.S., the constraints of the program are such that the forecast event typically has to be identified and a request made 60 to 96 hours in advance of affecting the west coast.

The procedure WR office should follow to request additional observations:

- 1) Call Monterey forecaster office no later than 5:30am PST. Monterey must prepare and send the request to the NCEP SDM no later than 6:30 am PST (9:30 am EST).
- 2) Please include the forecast event of interest identified by latitude/longitude and date/time, along with a brief description of need and a priority.

For additional information on the current WSR program:

<http://wwwt.emc.ncep.noaa.gov/gmb/targobs/target/wsr2004.html>

(note that the url starts wwwt rather than www)

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

Newest member of SOD: Please join me in welcoming the newest member of the Systems Operations Division, Merri Richmond. Merri will transfer to SOD from WFO Spokane where she served as an Electronics Technician since 1997. She brings over 20 years of electronics experience to the job and works on every system from ASOS to NEXRAD to CRS, NWR, and Upper Air. Merri is scheduled to report to WRH on April 5.

Highlights from the OOS/SOD conference: In early February, Bob Diaz and Jeff Walker attended the Office of Operations Systems/SOD/EPM conference in Silver Spring Maryland. Highlights, along with presentations, can be viewed of the conference on the Intranet homepage. Look for the link on the SOD web page titled "Highlights of the OOS/SOD Conference".

AWIPS Status: AWIPS Operational Build 3 (OB3) is scheduled for distribution beginning March 10, 2004. Montana WFOs will be scheduled early in the schedule so they can participate in the new WSR-88D VCP 12 testing with Central Region.

NORSTAR Training: WRH is planning a Norstar "train the trainer" session on March 16, 17, and 18. Telecorp Corporation from Carrollton, TX will be providing a trainer to WRH for six people that will receive the initial training. The initial six people are from WFO's located in Boise, Elko, Las Vegas, Flagstaff, Salt Lake City, and Phoenix. The initial six will work with the Regional Comms manager on developing the curriculum for a regional training course that will be offered to the Western Region WFO/RFCs latter in the year.

COMMS: Steve Keene recently spent time at WFO Salt Lake City and WFO Boise. Steve assisted WFO Salt Lake City in programming the NORSTAR phone system and he conducted a short training session for the Electronics Staff on the system layout and minor programming changes. Steve also spent time at WFO Boise and assisted the Electronics Staff in assigning a new trunk line into the NORSTAR system.